

PRESCHOOL OPTIONS

Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI)

The Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) is a high quality program for four-year-old children. VPI is supported by a grant from the Commonwealth of Virginia. To qualify for the program, the child must be an Arlington County resident, be four years old on or before September 30 and meet income requirements set by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Admission preference is based on income and other risk factors.

Primary Montessori

APS provides Montessori classes for three, four, and five-year-old students. Instruction is delivered through an interdisciplinary, multi-age approach to learning and is based on the work of Dr. Maria Montessori.

Two-thirds of the positions in each Montessori class are reserved for children whose parents'/guardians' income is at or less than 80% of the median income in Arlington County. Tuition shall be charged on a sliding scale for all enrolled students during the 3-year-old year. During the four-year-old year, parents/guardians of four-year-old children whose income is at or less than 80% of the median income in Arlington County pay no fee. All students in the Montessori classroom who are five years old on or before September 30 do not pay a fee as it is the student's kindergarten year.

Preference for openings that may occur for five-year-olds is given to students with previous Montessori experience.

PRESCHOOL APPLICATION PROCESS

Preschool applications will be accepted beginning February 1 and continuing through April 15 prior to the beginning of the school year for which the application is being made. Applications for the VPI and the Primary Montessori programs are available **in the most frequently spoken languages**, at elementary schools, on the Early Childhood webpage at www.apsva.us/school-options/pre-kindergarten-choices/ and through the central registration office.

To apply to the program, parents/guardians must submit an application to the central registration office.

Lottery

If there are more applications than spaces available, a random double-blind lottery will be held.

Primary Montessori Lotteries - will separate applicants into two pools with two-thirds of the slots identified whose parents' or guardians' income is at or less than 80% of the median income in Arlington County and one-third of the slots available for other applicants.

Waitlist

As a result of this lottery, waiting lists will be created. As space becomes available, admission will be offered to students on the waiting list in the order established by the lottery. Additional applications that are received after the application period will be added, in the order received, at the end of the appropriate wait list. The three-year-old wait list rolls over to become the four-year-old wait list the following year.

PRESCHOOL LOCATIONS

VPI is offered at every APS elementary option school. Preschool is also offered at neighborhood elementary schools to the extent possible, given financial constraints and capacity limits.

Four-year-old students in option schools are guaranteed admission to that school's K-5 program. All other students must attend their neighborhood school or submit an application to attend another school.

In the Superintendent's annual update to the School Board, APS will identify preschool locations for the following school year.